

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 were pending in the application. Claims 1-24 are canceled. Claims 25-26 are amended. Claims 27-44 are new. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 25-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Insofar as claims 25 and 26 have been amended as further described below, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 25-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,696,885 to Hekmapour. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 25 is amended to recite an apparatus for facilitating the management of costs associated with performing a plurality of processes to manufacture, service and/or maintain an aerospace system incorporating a plurality of physical components.

Hekmapour describes a hierarchical knowledge base having three levels: a behavioral level (BHKB), a structural level (SHKB), and an action level (CAT) (abstract; Fig. 7). To resolve a problem, node selection is performed, starting at a BHKB root node and descending through nodes to a terminal CAT node. If the problem is resolved, processing is done (Fig. 10; col. 18, line 63-col. 19, line 30). Hekmapour does not teach

or suggest determining "...whether the selected operation is a duplicate of another operation performable in the first process and/or performable in a second of the processes; and based on the determination, notify[ing] the user as to a possible reduction of costs by elimination of a duplicate performance of the selected operation" as recited in amended claim 25. Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 25 and claim 26 dependent on claim 25 should be allowed.

NEW CLAIMS

Claims 27-44 are new. Claims 27-32 depend from amended claim 25 and are supported in the specification. New claims 33-44 recite processor-performed methods of facilitating the management of costs associated with performing a plurality of processes to manufacture, service and/or maintain an aerospace system incorporating a plurality of physical components. New claims 33-44 are also supported in the specification. Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 27-44 are allowable in view of Hekmapour.

CONCLUSION

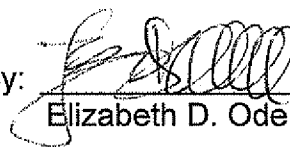
It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner

believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7521.

Respectfully submitted,

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